AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Sub D1

1. (Currently Amended) An image processing method for carrying out image processing on an image ~~including a figure~~, the image processing method comprising the steps of:

extracting ~~a face~~ an area ~~of the figure from~~ in the image; and

adjusting at least one of: density of the ~~face~~ extracted image area based on density information of an area in the image surrounding the ~~face~~ extracted image area so as to compensate for an effect of density of the surrounding image area ~~surrounding the face area~~ on visual perception of the density of the ~~face~~ extracted image area; and color of the ~~face~~ extracted image area based on color information of the surrounding image area ~~surrounding the face area~~ so as to compensate for an effect of color of the surrounding image area ~~surrounding the face area~~ on visual perception of the color of the ~~face~~ extracted image area.

2. (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus for carrying out image processing on an image ~~including a figure~~, the image processing apparatus comprising:

~~face area~~ extracting means for extracting ~~a face~~ an area ~~of the figure from~~ in the image; and

adjusting means for adjusting at least one of: density of the ~~face~~ extracted image area based on density information of an area in the image surrounding the ~~face~~ extracted image area so as to compensate for an effect of density of the surrounding image area ~~surrounding the face area~~ on visual perception of the density of the ~~face~~ extracted image area; and color of the face area based on color information of the surrounding image area ~~surrounding the face area~~ so as to compensate for an effect of color of the surrounding image area ~~surrounding the face area~~ on visual perception of the color of the ~~face~~ extracted image area.

3. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable recording medium storing a program to cause a computer to execute a method of carrying out image processing on an image ~~including a figure~~, the program comprising the procedures of:

extracting ~~a face~~ an area ~~of the figure from~~ in the image; and

adjusting at least one of: density of the ~~face~~ extracted image area based on density information of an area in the image surrounding the ~~face~~ extracted image area so as to compensate for an effect of density of the surrounding image area ~~surrounding the face area~~ on visual perception of the density of the ~~face~~ extracted image area; and color of the ~~face~~ extracted image area based on

color information of the surrounding image area ~~surrounding the face area~~ so as to compensate for an effect of color of the surrounding image area ~~surrounding the face area~~ on visual perception of the color of the ~~face~~ extracted image area.

4. (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus for carrying out image processing on an image ~~including a figure~~, the image processing apparatus comprising:

~~a face area~~ an extractor extracting ~~a face~~ an area ~~of the figure from~~ in the image; and

an adjustor adjusting at least one of: density of the ~~face~~ extracted image area based on density information of an area in the image surrounding the face area so as to compensate for an effect of density of the surrounding image area ~~surrounding the face area~~ on visual perception of the density of the ~~face~~ extracted image area; and color of the ~~face~~ extracted image area based on color information of the surrounding image area ~~surrounding the face area~~ so as to compensate for an effect of color of the surrounding image area ~~surrounding the face area~~ on visual perception of the color of the ~~face~~ extracted image area.

5. (Currently Amended) The image processing method of claim 1, further comprising:

designating an area surrounding the ~~face~~ extracted image area as a concentric area in the image excluding the ~~face~~ extracted image area.

6. (Currently Amended) The image processing method of claim 1, further comprising:

determining the surrounding image area ~~surrounding the face area~~ such that the surrounding image area ~~surrounding the face area~~ has a radius of 3 times a radius of the ~~face~~ extracted image area.

7. (Currently Amended) The image processing method of claim 1, further comprising:

dividing the surrounding image area into sub areas; and

calculating an average pixel density of each sub area.

8. (Currently Amended) The image processing method of claim 1, further comprising:

calculating density and/or color information of the surrounding image area ~~surrounding the face~~.

9. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The image processing method ~~for carrying out image processing on an image including a figure, the image processing method comprising the steps~~ of claim 11, wherein:

the extracting step extracts a flesh area of the figure ~~from~~ in the image as the extracted image area, the adjusting step adjusting at least one of density and color of the flesh area.; ~~and~~

~~adjusting at least one of: density of the flesh area based on density information of an area surrounding the flesh area so as to compensate for an effect of density of the area surrounding the flesh area on visual perception of the density of the flesh area; and color of the flesh area based on color information of the area surrounding the flesh area so as to compensate for an effect of color of the area surrounding the flesh area on visual perception of the color of the flesh area.~~

C 1 cont'd

10. (New) An image processing method for carrying out image processing on an image, the image processing method comprising the steps of:

extracting an area in the image; and

adjusting a density of the extracted image area based on density information of an area in the image surrounding the extracted image area so as to compensate for an effect of density of the surrounding image area on visual perception of the density of the extracted image area.

11. (New) The image processing method of claim 1, wherein the extracting step extracts a face area of a figure in the image as the extracted image area.